

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 06637 241653Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3083

INFO USMISSION USUN NY

USMISSION NATO

SECDEF WASHDC

JCS WASHDC

USCINCEUR

USCINCNAVEUR

USCINCUSAFE

16TH AF, TORREJON/CO

JUSMG/MAAG, SPAIN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, SP, US

SUBJ: SPANISH BASE NEGOTIATIONS - PRESS REACTION TO CORTINA'S
MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY

SUMMARY: APPARENTLY GUIDED BY CORTINA'S OWN BRIEFING OF THE PRESS
IN NEW YORK, THE MADRID MEDIA SUDDENLY ARE TAKING A DECIDEDLY
OPTIMISTIC VIEW OF THE POSSIBILITIES FOR AN EARLY AGREEMENT.
END SUMMARY.

1. SPANISH PRESS TREATMENT OF CORTINA'S MEETING
WITH THE SECRETARY ON SEPT 22 IS PERHAPS BEST SUMMARIZED BY ONE
REPORT THAT STATES THAT CORTINA LEFT THE MEETING WITH A SMILE
THAT EVEN CARRIED HIM THROUGH HIS CONVERSATION
THE NEXT DAY ON GIBRALTAR WITH BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY
CALLAGHAN. CORTINA HIMSELF REPORTEDLY TOLD THE PRESS THAT THE
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PAGE 02 MADRID 06637 241653Z

DISCUSSION WITH THE SECRETARY HAD BEEN "CORDIAL," THAT ALL

OPTIONS WERE OPEN, THAT THERE WOULD BE FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SECRETARY SOON, AND THAT HE WAS OPTIMISTIC.

2. THE SPANISH DOMESTIC RADIO SERVICE CHARACTERIZED THE MEETING IN ADVANCE AS DECISIVE. FELIX VALVERDE OF "YA" COMMENTED AFTERWARDS THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS APPEAR TO HAVE ENTERED A MORE FLEXIBLE PHASE. THE NEWS SERVICE CIFRA FILED A REPORT THAT, ACCORDING TO DIPLOMATIC OBSERVERS IN MADRID, A LAST MINUTE AGREEMENT IS POSSIBLE, APPEARING TO IMPLY THIS COULD EVEN OCCUR AT A SECOND MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY ON OR ABOUT THE 26TH.

3. VALVERDE ALSO REPORTS THAT, ACCORDING TO JEREMY O'LEARY IN THE WASHINGTON STAR, AN AGREEMENT MIGHT PROVIDE FOR RETENTION OF MOST EXISTING FACILITIES, A LEVEL OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE WHICH IS SUBSTANTIAL ALTHOUGH WELL BELOW SPANISH REQUESTS, AND A WASHINGTON PROMISE TO APPLY PRESSURE TO OBTAIN A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP FOR SPAIN WITH NATO. "ABC" ATTRIBUTES TO WELL-INFORMED SOURCES THE REPORT THAT US FACILITIES AT TORREJON AND MORON WILL BE CLOSED, WHILE "YA" REPORTS THAT THERE WILL BE NO SPANISH "RETREAT."

4. ALSO INTERESTING IS A SUGGESTION BY "ABC'S" POLITICAL COLUMNIST PEDRO CRESPO THAT CORTINA WENT TO NEW YORK "IN EXTREMIS," GIVEN AN UNCERTAIN POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE IN MADRID, MADE MORE DIFFICULT BY PRESSURES AND INTERFERENCES FROM ABROAD, INCLUDING THE PROBLEMS SURROUNDING SPAIN'S HANDLING OF ITS PROBLEMS WITH TERRORISTS.
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